

Busy Building Tomorrow

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Implementation Plan

As your Key 4, we are very proud to present the results of the work on the development of Areas performed by many of your colleagues who have been diligently forging toward an improved vision of Scouting. The attached document, a Council Operations Manual, represents the fruits of their labours and an extremely important step forward. While we fully expect the transition to implementation of this vision will require important efforts and the support and co-operation of all to make it a success, we know that we can count on you to ensure that delivering the Scouting program to our youth will continue throughout this period of change.

Attached to this communication you will find a high-level implementation plan which may serve as a guide to oversee the changes and some frequently asked questions (FAQ's), which will provide short answers to the most common queries.

For many, change makes for a difficult time and we sympathize with those that will feel the effects of uncertainty. We want to assure you that we are committed to explaining these changes and the important reasons underlying them, and to working with you with information and training sessions. We are not asking for an act of faith, this is a determined effort to advance Scouting, based on solid workable ideas, tested with your colleagues. We already have several Areas up and running successfully to prove the concept. It is important to know that we are not alone in this endeavour. Other provinces have undertaken parts of this initiative and we have also drawn upon the experience they have lived. We have outlined these changes with the national body and have their support.

Attached is a body of knowledge that we believe will serve as a reference document not only as we move forward but as a solid foundation for the road ahead. We will make copies available to all who need it, and as we move forward we are sure we will enhance it further as this development is a living change built on the positive experiences and contributions of bright Scouters everywhere.

Let us take a moment to touch on some of the key elements, the change process, and your contribution. Let us start out by confirming that all Scouters who currently have a positive attitude to Scouting and time to offer our youth will continue to be needed by this organization to provide service and support to our youth. We are seeking to use our volunteer talent more wisely and fully expect that even though it may mean a change of position for you, that you will continue to be enthused and find the new positions interesting and challenging.

Scouting has seen a significant reduction in membership over the last years and we need to use our adult resources wisely. We think there is an opportunity to re-deploy ourselves to better, through the Area Service Team Structure, to serve youth, where they meet to Scout. There is also an opportunity to improve communication and service linkages throughout the organization by bringing provincial and area teams closer to Groups. This project will be implemented prior to the start of the 2002/2003 Scouting year, which should allow plenty of time to adjust to the changes. Most importantly we will be in a position to start the next one fresh, having already made the necessary adjustments. We expect you to participate in the information and training necessary. And we are counting on you to embrace this change and through your positive support and talents to improve Scouting. The attached Operations Manual provides the details of the new organization and how it will operate and we expect that you will consult it regularly and that it will guide your actions after implementation.

Both the Commissioner and President as volunteers themselves never cease to be amazed by the vitality in this organization, its devotion to Scouting's youth and their energy, which we all draw upon. We therefore ask for your support for this important opportunity to advance Scouting and to making a difference in the lives of our youth.

Transition Plan

The most important aspect of the transition to Areas will be the movement of people. Currently District personnel are encouraged to continue "business as usual" until the time of implementation. There will be many positions to fill under the Areas and no District volunteer should be concerned about being unable to continue to play a role in the new context. It will be the job of the Council Commissioner together with the new Area Commissioner to form the new Area teams and work on a manpower plan to fully utilize our valuable human resources. Training will be a key aspect of a smooth and successful transition. Council Commissioner will be organizing training sessions for all new team members as part of the implementation plan.

Area financial Transition Guidelines

Below are the financial transition arrangements from conditions existing prior to implementation of an Area to the conditions required by the new structure. Since it is expected that the transition will take place during an existing year, special arrangements may well be required for some Groups/Districts for this year only. It is expected that there will be enough time for the subsequent year(s) that they may be planned appropriately. What some of these financial issues are and how they may be resolved is outlined below.

In overall terms it is expected that Districts and Groups becoming a new Area will naturally want to make their own decisions regarding the pre-change conditions in order to be able to move toward the new structure. It is expected that these would be made in an open spirit of democratic collaboration having in mind the benefit of the youth members and the future strength of this organization.

Pre-implementation – *"is business as usual"*

The implementation of the Area Service Team Structure Model will take place, commencing March 1, 2002, i.e. in the middle of an operating year. It would therefore make practical sense for Groups and Districts to continue the 2001/2002 operating year, as they would normally do. Therefore, District activities/events and funding requirements / assessments, membership registration, uniform requirements, training etc. should be assumed to continue and that any Group contributions/levies payable to District should be completed.

Post implementation – *"continuity should be ensured"*

It would also appear to be the most practical for District planned and organized activities to continue to be undertaken after *implementation date*, (unless all participants agree to do differently) therefore, Districts should plan accordingly. Local solutions may prove to be more effective than a pre-determined solution and flexibility is encouraged in order to ensure that youth programs continue to benefit. Discussions/negotiations by Districts and Groups being combined would need to address the impact of the transition for the remainder of the year and how continuity can be assured.

Timing

Transition of the financial aspects to the Area concept may commence at any time but shall commence no later than June of 2002. Completion of all financial transition arrangements (e.g. asset transfers, reimbursements to groups, event (*seed*) funds transferred etc.) shall be no later than 6 months after *implementation date* (*by August 31*,

2002). Specifically, whilst District bank and any other redundant accounts may be closed out earlier, they must be closed no later than 6 months after *implementation date (by August 31, 2002)*.

Financial Aspects and the importance of Groups

The key pieces are expected to be bank accounts, monies, equipment assets and property assets. The Area concept has no financial administration done by the Area. Groups will continue to operate as before. Groups will take up the financial administration for Area events and activities. Districts will be dissolved. The main issues revolve therefore around how to deal with, existing District assets and finances and providing appropriate support to Group Committees.

The first objective should therefore be to ensure that the continuing Groups have effective financial management practices and a clearly capable and responsible treasurer in place and that their assets and finances are in satisfactory condition. District teams and the new Area team should ensure this.

Districts

All District assets – equipment or property - should be reviewed and its origins identified and their continued useful purpose determined. Where assets are clearly of no future use or may even be a burden, a disposition plan needs to be prepared by the District Council (including how to deal with any disposal costs and their funding) and implemented on a timely basis along with the allocation of any resulting funds as determined by the Council Management Committee.

Where the assets are determined to have a continuing useful purpose for members, Groups should be identified which would take over custodial responsibilities. For any properties owned by Scouts Canada, special transition considerations will apply and staff will work with the areas concerned. For any other large value (single) asset (\$5000 or more) the Council Treasurer should be notified at the outset of the transition and informed as to the plan for dealing with it well before implementation is completed in case of a need for any contingency planning. Only where the District clearly wishes it, would transfer of custody to the Council be a consideration.

For District bank accounts and monies, the plan must be to work towards a closing out of all bank accounts consequent with the start up of, or joining with, the new Area. To allow for continuation and continuity of service and support to the groups, two years worth of District Operating funds will be put into an area-servicing fund with the Council. Excess funds would be distributed back to Groups on the same basis, as they would normally have contributed funds during a year. Where this is not clear, then any allocation should be made based on the proportions of registered membership as at March

31, 2002. The Council Executive Director requires a report and statements no later than one month after close out. Where more substantial funds (\$5,000+) are involved discussions directly with the Council Executive Director are suggested. Only where a District clearly wishes it, would transfer of custody to the Council be a consideration.

Areas and Boundaries

Listed below are districts that will now make up the new service areas. It should be noted that in the future, boundaries might move to accommodate practical needs for area teams. The goal is to make areas viable for service teams to meet servicing targets. Population and geography may pose limitations on an area team's effectiveness.

The (insert # i.e. 5) service areas are as follows:

Service Area 1: (insert the geographical makeup of the area)

Service Area 2: (insert the geographical makeup of the area)

Etc.: etc.

Etc.: etc.

Etc.: etc.

Note: Service Area numbers are used above only to facilitate the transition. The members of the Area are encouraged to decide on a name for the Area and may design a crest to represent the Area.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's):

Q: Who contributed to this project?

Started by the Council Key 4, this project has engaged a number of Scouters from across the Council to contribute to analyzing in detail the concept, ideas and implementation plans. There have also been many meetings and communications on this subject throughout over the last 12 months. As well, input and concepts have been drawn from other provinces that have undergone similar changes and consultation with the National Governance Board has been ongoing from the concept stage through to Council Manual completion.

Q: Why change from the District Structure to the Area Structure?

Membership in Scouting has been steadily shrinking for many years and this requires a better way of communicating, servicing and delivering the Scouting program to our youth. The Area Service

Team Structure will permit a reallocation of scarce adult volunteer resources within a fewer number of Service Areas permitting improvement in Group servicing.

Q: Why are we doing this now?

Simply put, because we need to find a better way to use our resources and reverse the decline in members.

Q: Is this just an idea of our Council?

No. Our Council has drawn upon a number of examples (particularly the Group Scouter concept) from other provinces and also has the encouragement of the national body.

Q: What is a Group Scouter?

A Group Scouter is a Group Committee member and a member of the Area Service Team who will serve as the focus for Group program and servicing issues. He/she will also be the primary contact between the Area Service Team and the Group.

Q: What are the benefits of the Area Service Team Structure?

A single point of focus for Groups and Area Service Teams; decentralized servicing; accessible, timely, responsive and personal service; volunteer development opportunities delivered in a flexible and timely manner; and lastly but not least, an opportunity for better communication through all levels of the organization.

Q: How will the Area be serviced and by whom?

Each Service Area will be the responsibility of an Area Commissioner and his/her service team. Some of the team positions may require more than one person to provide adequate service to Groups, e.g. there may be more than one AAC Group Support etc.

Q: How can a smaller Service Team effectively service a larger area?

By removing the administrative load that the Districts now carry, the Area Service Team will service the Groups in a much more efficient manner. There will be more direct support from the Council Management Committee, Council Training Committee, etc. The Area Service Team structure is flexible to allow the Area Service Team to best manage their resources.

Q: What will the new organization look like?

Our Council will comprise of the Community Advisory Board, Council Management Committee, Area Service Teams and the Groups that provide Scouting to our youth. This will be a compact and interactive organization, where the Group can communicate directly with the Council decision making body personally or through their Area Service Scouters. Many of the Area Service Scouters will be present on Council decision-making committees.

Q: What happens to District money?

This is a decision for the District and its members to take democratically. Guidelines have been provided to assist this process. It is expected however that any funds not allocated for activities/events this year will be returned to the Group members who contributed it originally.

Q: Is there a job for me?

Yes! Although there will be a reallocation of people and functions, everyone will be needed. Scouting always requires keen and positive minded volunteers who want to give of their time to help our youth.

Q: Who will handle administration now?

In order to be effective and to focus on servicing and program delivery, the Area Service Team will not handle administrative matters. The Council Management Committee will deal with these functions through the Groups supporting the area and for Area Service Team needs.

Q: How does this affect my Group?

At the Group level very little impact is expected and it should be business as usual BUT with better support and more co-ordination available.

Q: What are the benefits of the new system for the youth?

By receiving better access to Service Scouters, Section Leaders will be better equipped to effectively deliver an exciting program. The Area Service Team Structure creates Area Youth Representatives and a Chair (Deputy Commissioner Youth) and Vice Chair of a Council Youth Forum that provides our youth with a greater voice within the organization.

Q: How will a Group Scouter monitor section program standards?

The delivery of safe challenging and fun programs to youth is what Scouting is all about. The challenge for each Group Scouter will be to ensure their Group is delivering quality programs through a variety of support mechanisms offered by the Area Service Team.

By sitting down with the Section leadership teams and discussing the program standards, the Group Scouter can help the Section leaders plan their program so that it will meet or exceed the program standards. The Program Standards Checklist which is produced Nationally, can be used to ensure that a particular Section is providing a program that is up to the established Scouts Canada standard.

Q: What will Service Area meetings look like?

Timely communication and feedback are recognized as key components in the new Area Service Team Structure. Area Commissioners will need to be in regular contact with their Assistant Area Commissioners, hold regular meetings with their Group Scouters, and Group Chairpersons to ensure effective and efficient service and program support.

The style and type of meetings held will be very different from the past District structure. Group needs will determine what meetings take place. Scouters' Clubs, Section specific meetings, social functions between Groups, etc, are examples of where the identified need will contribute to and drive the meeting activity.

Q: What's going to happen to current District events?

The delivery of Scouts Canada programs will continue to be the responsibility of the Groups. Events that support the delivery of quality youth programs will continue to run.

The coming year will be a transition year as we move from the former District events and camps to an Area wide concept. We suspect a great number of the former District type events will continue and hopefully with involvement of other Groups in the Area.

In the building phase of the Area, former District events will have to be analyzed by the incoming Area Service Team to determine if they can be expanded to include other Groups and run as in the past, or be replaced by an Area wide event. A list of potential events can be presented to Group Scouters and Group Chairs at the building phase of the Area. This list can be taken back to the Group for discussion with their Section leaders. A final decision of what events will be held can be made at the first Area meeting.

The Service Area Team will be responsible for coordinating Section specific and other events based on support from the Groups. Where such events take place, Groups will provide volunteers to help plan and conduct them. These events can be budgeted on a self-financing basis, where the Groups can provide their treasurer to oversee the finances on a rotating basis. Some guidance has been provided for this.

Q: What if a Group cannot recommend a Group Scouter for appointment?

If a Group has not identified a Group Scouter, we will rely on, as an interim short-term solution, the Group Chair as the main point of contact on program issues on an interim basis. The Area Service Team will assist the Group to identify as soon as possible a Group Scouter.

Q: How will Service Area funding be handled?

Guidance has been provided for this. The budget for Area Service Team activities should be rotated through each Group on an event-by-event basis as a responsibility; i.e. a specific Group will handle the funds for a specific activity. The Council Management Committee will support the needs of the Area Service Team.